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LETTER DATED 17 FEBRUARY 1994 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement of 17 February 1994 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation regarding the lifting of the siege of Sarajevo (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Y. VORONTSOV

Annex

Statement of 17 February 1994 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

In the last few days Russia has undertaken additional efforts with a view to the implementation of the proposal it put forward at the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly regarding the lifting of the siege of Sarajevo and the transfer of this city to United Nations control. The implementation of this proposal is the goal we have been and are working towards, acting openly and within the framework of Security Council resolutions. We continue to follow the same line even now, despite the serious aggravation of the situation regarding Sarajevo, the causes of which are known.

As a result of the steps taken by the Russian leadership and some intense diplomatic activity, this sustained and consistent line, which excludes unilateral ultimatums, has borne fruit.

In response to our appeal, the Bosnian Serbs took the decision at their Assembly in Pale to withdraw their heavy weaponry from the area of Sarajevo.

We believe that this manifestation of good will of one of the parties to the conflict at a moment which is critical to the settlement will elicit similar moves by the other party.

We urge the Bosnian Government to place without delay all its heavy weapons in and around Sarajevo under UNPROFOR's control in accordance with the Secretary-General's plan set out in his letter to the Security Council of 10 February.

We also urge our partners in the effort to secure a settlement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and first of all the United States of America and the countries of the European Community, that, in the spirit of their statements about the preferability of a political settlement, they prevail on the Bosnian Government to cooperate with the United Nations in the full lifting of the siege of Sarajevo and the demilitarization of Sarajevo.

At the present crucial moment, it is extremely important to prevent any acts of provocation or sabotage against this peace process. Not only the fate of Sarajevo but also that of the settlement in Bosnia and Herzegovina in general depend on it.

After the lifting of the siege of Sarajevo, the Security Council could, as we proposed at an earlier time, immediately start to consider ways to establish the United Nations administration in that city and measures to strengthen other safe areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In order to step up its own contribution to the turn towards peace, Russia is ready to send a part of its military contingent currently in the United Nations Force to ensure control over the implementation of agreements on lifting the siege of Sarajevo.